



# SEAT PLEASANT NEWS

AUGUST EDITION

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## City of Seat Pleasant

### Mayor

Eugene W. Grant

### Council President

Latasha Gatling

(At Large Councilmember)

### Ward I Councilmember

Elenora Simms

### Ward II Councilmember

Aretha Stephenson

### Ward III Councilmember

Reveral Yeargin

### Ward IV Councilmember

Gerald Raynor

### Ward V Councilmember

Darrell Hardy

### AT Large Council member

Kelly Porter

### Acting City Administrator/

#### Treasurer

Robert L. Ashton

### Chief of Police

Samuel Prue

### Director of Public Works

Johnny Thompson

### City Clerk

Dashaun Lanham

## CITY HOSTS NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



On Tuesday, August 3rd, the City held its Annual National Night Out at the park at 6811 G Street behind the Seat Pleasant Activity Center from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Every year The Seat Pleasant Police Department and the Seat Pleasant's Citizens for Public Safety Advisory Council (CPAC) host the event.

National Night Out is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness; generate support for, and participation in local anticrime programs; strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships; and send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

National Night Out was introduced by Matt A. Peskin, Executive Director of the National Association of Town Watch (a non-profit, crime prevention organization which works with thousands of crime watch groups and law enforcement agencies throughout the country). Peskin felt that a high-profile, high-impact type of crime prevention event was needed nationally in an effort to heighten awareness and strengthen participation in local anticrime efforts.

The first year, 400 communities in 23 states participated in National Night Out. In subsequent years, participation increased steadily. Last year 35.4 million people in 11,310 communities from all 50 states, U. S. territories, Canadian Cities, and military bases worldwide were involved in National Night Year. 12,000 communities were expected to participate this year.

At this year's event, the citizens took part in a moment of silence to honor Maryland State Trooper Wesley Brown. Wesley Brown grew up in the area and was slain while working an off duty security detail at a Forestville restaurant. He was well known for mentoring at risk young men through his organization Young Men Enlightening Young Men. His brother, Sylvester Brown, was in attendance and intends to continue his brother's legacy. He said that his brother Wesley was in support of National Night Out. He also stated that he (Wesley) wanted people in the community to become more familiar with the police and let them know "they are not the enemy".

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## GREETINGS FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Greetings!

I hope that you are enjoying your summer thus far. As always please remain safe and stay cool. Please be sure to visit the City website at [www.seatpleasantmd.gov](http://www.seatpleasantmd.gov)!

The City Council is in recess for the month of August. However, if you have questions, comments, or concerns please contact City Hall or your Councilmember.

Remember to be safe and watch out for children as school is out for summer break. We look forward to seeing each of you at our Public Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 7:00 pm at City Hall. Again, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us at 301-336-2600.

Sincerely,  
*LaTasha C. Gatling*  
Council President  
City of Seat Pleasant  
"A City of Excellence"

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## COUNCIL LEGISLATION

The City Council has passed the following legislation during the month of July

Resolution R-11-01 Solar Panel Competitive Bid Exemptions passed on July 6, 2010

Resolution R-11-02 Council Recess passed on July 12, 2010

Ordinance O-11-01 Budget Amendment passed on July 19, 2010

Copies of the legislation are available from the Office of the City Clerk at  
Seat Pleasant City Hall



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## ELENORA SIMMS APPOINTED TO MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE 2011 CONVENTION PLANNING COMMITTEE

Elenora Simms has been appointed as a member of the Maryland Municipal League's 2011 Convention Planning Committee. This committee has the responsibility of working with the Maryland Municipal League staff to formulate the theme for the MML Convention as well as plan workshops, general sessions, and social events held at the convention. The Maryland Municipal League works to strengthen the role and capacity of municipal government through research, legislation, technical assistance, training and the dissemination of information for its members. Meetings and workshops are an important component of the annual convention. Ms. Simms continues to be actively involved in the



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(Councilwoman Simms con't.)

the Maryland Municipal League. One of her most recent achievements was being awarded a certificate of completion for the Planning commission Planning Board and Board of Appeals Education Course which resulted from her participation in that training.

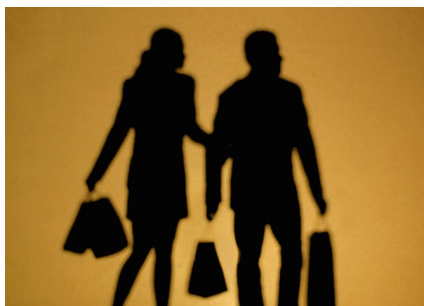


## WALK WITH THE COUNCIL

Need to get fit? Help is on the way! As part of Seat Pleasant's Health and Wellness Campaign, the City Council invites residents to be a part of "Walk With a Council Member". Walking with a partner or with a group increases the chance for achieving fitness goals. It also helps to provide greater motivation than exercising alone. There are several shifts available including early morning or late afternoons as well as weekend mornings. Interested parties should contact Ms. Aretha Stephenson at 240-601-1037 to indicate their preference. Bottled water will be supplied for those who participate.

## SHOP MARYLAND WEEK RETURNS

Submitted by Councilman Kelly Porter



Shop Maryland is returning after a four-year hiatus. The popular tax-free week will take place this summer from August 8th to August 14th. Shoppers will receive a 6% tax break simply by purchasing qualifying clothing and footwear priced at \$100 or less.

During the 2007 Special Session, the General Assembly enacted two annual tax-free periods beginning in 2010, a tax free week on clothing and shoes in August, and a tax free weekend for Energy Star Products and solar water heaters in February.

As in previous years, the tax-free week will attract business to local retailers as consumers seek bargains. The timing of the event, just prior to the start of school will encourage families to shop in Maryland as they purchase back-to-school necessities.

Items eligible for the Shop Maryland Tax break include: sweaters, shirts, slacks, jeans, dresses, robes, underwear, belts, shoes and boots. The large majority of items priced \$100 or less will qualify for the tax break, but it should be noted that some items will not.

Accessories, including jewelry, watches, watchbands, handbags, scarves and belt buckles, are not exempt from sales tax. Special clothing or footwear designed primarily for protective use and not for normal wear, such as football pads, is also taxable.

Articles sold as a unit, such as a pair of shoes or a suit normally priced on a single price tag cannot be priced separately during the tax-free period to avoid sales tax.

A list of exempt and taxable items is available on the Comptroller's Web site at [www.marylandtaxes.com](http://www.marylandtaxes.com) or by calling the Comptroller's Office toll-free at:

1-800-MD-TAXES.



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## GIVING FINANCIAL INFORMATION TO A SECOND PARTY

by Robert Ashton



The purpose of this article is to share helpful hints regarding the forwarding of financial information to a second party.

**First : Hold on to your personal information.** Do not give any personal information over the phone or internet to an unfamiliar company or caller. This includes your credit card numbers, but also, the credit card expiration date, your social security number, driver license number, bank account numbers, or personal information such as your mother's maiden name. Even if you are told it is only for identification or verification purposes, this information can be used for unauthorized credit cards or bank accounts debits. Tell the person to send their request to you in the

mail and that you will check out their records with the Better Business Bureau.

**Second: Pay the safest way.** Many enjoy the convenience of online shipping. If you're an online shopper remember it's best to use a credit card as your payment option and to check that the internet connection your are using is secure. Under Federal law you can dispute the charges if you don't get what you were promised or if the product is not delivered within the stated time period. Many credit cards issuers also have a zero liability policy for unauthorized charges in the event your credit card number is stolen.

**Third: Arm yourself with information.** The Better Business Bureau offers safe shopping advice and other helpful tips at its website: [bbb.org](http://bbb.org). When in doubt always checks things out. Consult with trusted family members friends or neighbor before making a major purchasing decision. Whenever, you have a question or concern regarding a merchant or marketplace transaction, contact your local Better Business Bureau or check the consumers tips and alert at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org).

**Fourth: Use direct deposit.** Your mail – both incoming and outgoing can be vulnerable. If your social security or supplemental Security Income (SSI) check or other payment is delivered by mail to an unlock box you may be at risk for theft. Direct Deposit eliminates the risk or lost or stolen checks, reduces fraud, an give people faster access to their money on payment day. Direct Deposit also protects against identity theft. For more information about enrolling in direct deposit of your Social Security on SSI payment call the Go Direct helpline at 1-800-332-1795 or sign up on line at [www.Godirect.Org](http://www.Godirect.Org).

For additional information or for assistance please contact Robert L. Ashton City Treasurer at (301) 336-2600 ext 2236.

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## A WORD FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

### NEW CELL PHONE LAW TO GO INTO EFFECT

Submitted by Chief Samuel Prue

Maryland Senate Bill 321 was signed into law by Governor O'Malley. The new law will prohibit all Maryland drivers from using a cell phone without a hands free device while operating a motor vehicle. In addition the new law would prohibit "a holder of a learner's instructional permit or provisional driver's license who is 18 years of age or older from driving a motor vehicle while using a handheld telephone". The fine for a first offense would be \$40 and subsequent offenses would be \$100. (continued on the next page)

(cell phone laws con't.)

The new law would be a secondary offense, meaning that a driver must first be committing a primary offense such as speeding or reckless driving before they could be ticketed for a cell phone offense. The new law is scheduled to go into effect October 2010.

Other 2010 legislation included:

**Maryland House Bill 236**: which prohibits a person from driving in an inattentive manner resulting in the unsafe operation of the motor vehicle when the inattention is caused by the person engaging in specified preoccupying activities, provides that a violation of the Act is not a moving violation for the purpose of assessing points, authorizes a police officer to enforce the Act only as a secondary offense.

**Other cell phone legislation includes:**

Maryland's House Bill 72 and Senate Bill 98 prohibits an individual from writing or sending a text message while operating a motor vehicle or in the travel portion of the roadway. If you are convicted of a misdemeanor of the new and text messaging law you will receive a fine of \$500. The new law does not apply to emergency situations (texting 9-1-1) or global positioning systems.

**Cell Phone Laws regarding minors:**

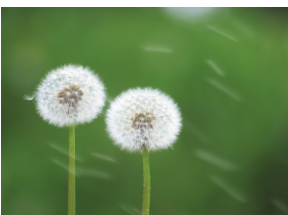
Maryland has a cell phone law that was first enacted in May 2005. The cell phone legislation known as Senate Bill 50, prohibits drivers under the age of 18 from using a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle. This includes drivers with a permit and drivers using a provisional drivers license. There are not allowances for hands free devices under the bill. This cell phone law is only enforceable as a secondary offense. This means the driver must be pulled over for another primary violation such as speeding or running a red light to be ticketed for the cell-phone violation. Like many cell-phone laws across the United States, there are exceptions for emergency situations.



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## FROM THE OFFICE OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

Recently, the Code Enforcement Department joined with the Prince George's County Revenue Authorities to help eliminate some of the vehicle violations that are in Seat Pleasant. The purpose of this collaboration is to allow the city to be able to clean up vehicle violations that are not on the city code books but that are on the County and State level. Out of State vehicles will also be addressed by the MVA in the upcoming months. Please be mindful and contact your locate office to make whatever changes that are necessary.



Residents should also be aware of the new 8 inch height maximum requirement for grass and weeds on your property. Read on to find the most common offenses in the City of Seat Pleasant.

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(code enforcement con't.)

**Most common offenses within the City are the following:**

**IMPC: 302.1- Sanitation-** All exterior property and premises shall be maintained in a clean, safe and sanitary condition. The occupant shall keep that part of the exterior property which such occupant occupies or controls in a clean and sanitary condition.

**IMPC: 302.4- Weeds** – All premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of 8” inches **and weeds off fences**. All noxious weeds shall be prohibited. Weeds shall be defined as all grasses, annual plants and vegetation, other than trees or shrubs provided; however, this term shall not include cultivated flowers and gardens.

**IMPC: 302.8- Motor Vehicles**– Except as provided for in other regulations, no inoperative or unlicensed motor vehicle shall be parked, kept or stored on any premises, and no vehicle shall at any time be in a state of major disassembly, disrepair, or in the process of being stripped or dismantled. **Vehicles must be parked on asphalt, concrete, gravel, brick stone or any non-porous material; vehicles shall not be parked on the grass.** All vehicles within the city of Seat Pleasant need to be properly licensed within the State of Maryland.

FYI - If you reside in the state of Maryland you must register your vehicle within 60 days of moving into the state of Maryland. After the 61<sup>st</sup> day you can be assessed a fine of \$ 371.00 and your license plates can be taken of your vehicle by the MVA.

## BEAT THE HEAT!

We all know how hot and muggy it has been this summer—not unusual weather for Seat Pleasant, but this summer we have broken national records for the number of days it has been over 100 degrees! Many of us enjoy the summer months and warm weather, but this isn't warm weather—it is extreme heat that can cause health problems. Luckily health problems related to extreme heat are preventable.

People suffer from heat related illnesses when they are unable to cool themselves, which we normally do by sweating. When it is super hot and muggy though, sweating isn't enough and your body temperature can rise too high. Muggy conditions make it worse because sweat cannot evaporate quickly enough from your body. Those at highest risk for heat related problems are the elderly and very young and people who are mentally ill or living with a chronic disease. Other risk factors include obesity, fever, dehydration, sunburn, alcohol or prescription drug use and participating in intense physical activity during hot weather.

The best protective factor is to use air conditioning, but not everyone has it. If you do not have it, go somewhere with air-conditioning—the mall, a grocery store, the library, a movie theater or a friend's home. Another thing you can do to stay cool and beat the heat is to drink plenty of fluids (water is best), even if you do not feel thirsty. Don't drink liquids that contain alcohol or lots of sugar because these drinks cause you to lose body fluid. Very cold drinks can cause stomach cramps, so cool drinks are best. If you usually have to limit how much fluid you drink or you are on water pills, ask your doctor what you should do during very hot weather.



Other things you can do to protect yourself include replacing salts and minerals, wearing lightweight loose fitting clothes, using sunscreen, doing outdoor activities in the early morning or evening when it is cooler and pacing yourself during very hot weather. Do not leave children or pets in cars (even for a minute), and if you are older, have a family member or friend call you during a heat wave twice a day to make certain you are okay. Follow these tips and beat the heat!

## SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

from The Seat Pleasant Citizen's for Public Safety Advisory Council (CPAC)

It's been a really hot summer here in Seat Pleasant and we want you to continue to stay cool and have a safe summer. Do you know that two thirds of all grill fires happen between May and September? Here are a few grill tips to keep you safe:

- Teach your children to stand at least three feet away from the grill.
- Use propane and charcoal grills ONLY outdoors.
- Make sure your grill is placed well away from your home, deck, and/or tree branches.
- NEVER leave your grill unattended.
- If you have a gas grill and smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call 911.  
*Don't move the grill.*
- ONLY use charcoal lighter fluid to start charcoal grills.



Enjoy your cookouts this summer and don't forget to invite your neighbors! Talk about the Neighborhood Watch Program over your ribs, hot dogs, and hamburgers!!

Stay safe. Feel free to contact us at [cpac.seatpleasant@live.com](mailto:cpac.seatpleasant@live.com)



**This election, the first choice you'll make is which day to vote.**

**Early Voting  
September 3rd – 9th  
except for Sunday, September 5<sup>th</sup>**

Introducing Early Voting.!!! In addition to Election Day, now you can choose to vote on any one of six additional days. Early voting centers will be open 10am to 8pm, Friday, September 3 – Thursday, September 9, 2010, except for Sunday, September 5. Voting is convenient, accessible and on your schedule.

**Go to [MDEarlyVote.com](http://MDEarlyVote.com) for more information about Early Voting.**

### **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY EARLY VOTING CENTER LOCATIONS**

**College Park Community Center**  
5051 Pierce Avenue  
College Park, MD 20740

**Wayne K. Curry Sports & Learning Center**  
8001 Sheriff Road  
Landover, MD 20785

**Bowie Library**  
1210 Annapolis Road  
Bowie, MD 20715

**Oxon Hill Library**  
6200 Oxon Hill Road  
Oxon Hill, MD 20745

**Upper Marlboro Community Center**  
5400 Race Track Rd  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772



The voter registration deadline is quickly approaching !!! Register by August 24, 2010!!  
For more information, contact the Prince George's County Board of Elections at 301 - 430-8020.

City of Seat Pleasant

*"A City of Excellence"*

6301 Addison Road

Seat Pleasant, Maryland 20743



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## SUMMER IN THE PARK

GOODWIN PARK 311 68TH PLACE

**ONLY 2 EVENTS LEFT!**

**Sunday, August 22nd**

**Jazz in the Park**

**6:00 - 9:00 P.M.**

**Sunday, August 29th**

**Gospel Nite**

**6:00 - 9:00 P.M.**

All events are free and open to the public

Lawn chair seating accepted

Limited capacity

For more information call 301-336-2600

NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ALLOWED IN THE PARK

